

## GOVERNEMENT STATUS REPORT - POLAND

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### INTRODUCTION

The following report contains information on the progress achieved in Poland with regard to road traffic safety since the time of 16<sup>th</sup> ESV Conference (Windsor, 1998). This period can be generally characterised as an intensive work towards effective implementation of EU legal instruments in all aspects of our life. Traffic safety is also involved in that effort at all its main system fields taking into account priorities drawn from accident statistics.

### THE PROGRESS IN THE FIELD OF VEHICLE RELATED FACTOR

In fulfilling of the European Treaty schedule the consecutive corrections and additions had been endorsed in Polish law. The new 13 ECE 1958 Geneva Regulations were added last year to our type approval system, which since November 1999 is unified with the latest versions of three main framework EU Directives (70/156 motor vehicles, 74/151 – agricultural tractors and 92/61 – motorcycles and mopeds). The legal procedure of accession to next 24 Regulations is now in progress and we hope this will result of total 85 ECE Regulations applied in Poland by the end of 2001. It does not mean however that at the above date we will complete the unification to EU in the field. According to the internal activity schedule agreed with European Commission the full harmonisation of Polish technical vehicle requirements is to be reached by the date of accession whatever it would be. It is to be stressed that the vast majority of important safety and environmental items regarding motor vehicles are already in force. Moreover there is also a lot of action in the research and testing domestic third party laboratories harmonising their quality systems to European Standards. Poland had almost completed internal procedures regarding our accession to 1998 Global Agreement recognising that as an effective way to harmonise worldwide the important vehicle technical requirements. In consequence we continue our participation in IHRA initiative.

With regard to the system of periodic technical inspection of in-use vehicles we are also in the process of permanent improvements to its quality and objectivity of checks. The PTI checking

equipment is currently under obligatory certification and we started with the continuous training of PTI inspectors. In the result of more stringent requirements regarding the personnel qualification and equipment quality the number of PTI stations had dropped down of some 25% since 1995, while the rate of traffic accidents due to bad technical state of vehicle gone down about 50%. Moreover, there are already around 500 stations of highest technical level having the care agreement with Motor Transport Institute on the base of which they receive latest available data and information regarding professional items. The decision on the accession of Poland to the UN 1997 Agreement on the international PTI had been taken and is to be finalised in 2001.

### THE PROGRESS IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RELATED FACTOR

From the accident statistics it still appears that in the majority of cases the human behaviour is the reason of road accident. Two main road users – drivers and pedestrians are sharing this fatal record in the rate 3.5 to 1 being involved as casual factor in more than 95% of accidents. Our National Road Safety Council pays the greatest attention to the problem but had by now succeeded in limited number of fields. The most important result was achieved in reducing the rate of accidents caused by drunken road users of around 15% during last 4 years. This is however far not satisfactory and caused new, more stringent legislation which went in force since December 2001. First three months of this law showed, according to police random check information some 10% drop of number of drunken drivers on our roads (not necessarily involved in accidents). It is really easy to be understood as the new legal penalty starts from half a year of imprisoning and two years of driving license withdrawal.

The other activity on the field of human factor realised in last 3 years was direction on road education of children, promotion of safety of non protected road users (III UN Road Safety Week), improvements of driver training and scientific co-operation in IHRA Pedestrian WG. Our latest traffic code enlarged also by 1 month the season of mandatory use of lights in daytime and precise in a

better way, more close to the one commonly used in EU, the “right side priority” rules.

## THE PROGRESS IN THE FIELD OF ROAD RELATED FACTOR

At this field we noticed some progress but rather far from our expectation. We have by now 300 km of classified motorways only, which is estimated as less than 10% of average in EU countries. Fortunately there are signs of spring in the form of finalisation of agreements between authority and two main road private investors. During last three year period the road maintenance service managed to improve some 20% of Polish existing road network classified as „national” (46 000 km in total). Taking into account more or less stabile growths of number

of vehicles on the roads it seems far not enough. This item is however strongly related to private investors and local authorities (traffic control solutions) and needs more careful attention of economy rulers.

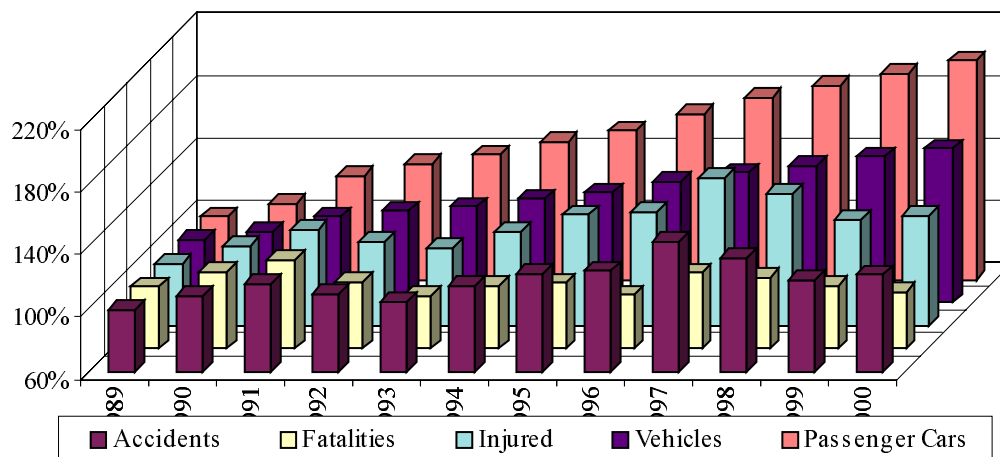
## CONCLUSION

The overall road traffic safety in Poland seems to be improved during last 3-year period on the base of statistic data given below. But improved does not mean good in comparison to our society needs. We hope that Polish participation in ESV, IHRA, UN ECE Working Groups as well as growing support of EU Commission will result in optimal use of our limited resources.

I would like to wish all of you a good co-operation and fruitful exchange of knowledge in this very important part of everyday life – road traffic safety.

**Table 1. Accident Data in Comparison with the Vehicle Stock and Population in Poland in the Period 1989-2000**

Year	No. of Accidents	No. of Fatalities	No. of Injured	No. Of Vehicles (thousands)	No. of Passenger Cars (thousands)	Population (thousands)	Fatality Factor (No. of Fatalities/1 mln of Inhabitants)	Accident Severity Factor (No. of Fatalities/100 of Accidents)	No. of Passenger Cars/1000 Inhabitants
1989	46 338	6 724	53 639	8 596	4 846	38 038	177	15	127
1990	50 532	7 333	59 611	9 041	5 261	38 183	192	15	138
1991	54 038	7 901	65 242	9 860	6 112	38 309	206	15	160
1992	50 989	6 946	61 046	10 207	6 505	38 418	181	14	169
1993	48 901	6 341	58 812	10 438	6 771	38 505	165	13	176
1994	53 647	6 744	64 573	10 858	7 153	38 581	175	13	185
1995	56 904	6 900	70 226	11 186	7 517	38 609	179	12	195
1996	57 911	6 359	71 419	11 766	8 054	38 639	165	11	208
1997	66 586	7 310	83 169	12 284	8 533	38 650	189	11	221
1998	61 855	7 080	77 560	12 709	8 891	38 661	183	11	230
1999	55 106	6 730	68 449	13 169	9 283	38 654	174	12	240
2000	56 766	6 507	69 976	13 616	9 673	38 644	168	11	250



**Figure 1. Road Accidents and Vehicle Stock Percentages in Poland in the Period 1989-2000**  
**(1989=100%)**